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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000425

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SUBJECT: METI VICE MINISTER EMPHASIZES ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY
AND IMPORTANCE OF CHINA IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

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Classified By: Charge d'Affaires James Zumwalt, reasons 1.4 (b) and)(d)

¶1. (C) Summary: METI Vice Minister Mochizuki called for continued U.S.-Japan cooperation in research and development of clean energy technology and in bringing the emerging market economies into a post-Kyoto framework during his February 18 meeting with Climate Change Special Envoy Stern. Mochizuki said while China and India could not be forced into participating in a new climate agreement, they could be convinced to join by demonstrating the economic benefits of clean energy technology. He added that developed countries would have to invest heavily in clean energy R&D. S/E Stern reminded Mochizuki of the urgency of getting an international framework in place and actions taken to reduce GHG emissions, and outlined the challenges to the U.S. and international community. Both agreed on the value of a dialogue among the major emitters and S/E Stern noted the possibility of a leaders' meeting on climate change/energy on the margins of this year's G8 Summit. End summary.

METI Focus on Clean Energy and Getting China On Board

¶12. (C) Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) Vice Minister Harufumi Mochizuki met Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern to discuss continuing strong U.S.-Japan cooperation on energy and climate change February 18 in Tokyo. Mochizuki began by citing two points as essential for progress: research and development in clean energy technology and energy efficiency, which he called the most important issue, and including all major emitters in any new framework for addressing climate change.

¶13. (C) Mochizuki said the long-term solution to climate change lies in developing technologies to produce clean energy and boost energy efficiency. To do this, he said developed countries must make a considerable financial investment. He noted Japan and the U.S. already are cooperating on a number of such research projects and cited GOJ work with the Department of Energy at Los Alamos National

Labs on nuclear and clean energy. (Note: Mochizuki distributed power point presentations on Japan's cooperation with the United States and with China on clean energy and the environment. Scans of these hand outs have been sent to S/ECC and EAP/J. End note.) Mochizuki added PM Aso will mention this cooperation during the February 24 summit in Washington.

¶4. (C) Mochizuki talked at length about the importance of including all major emitters in a post-Kyoto framework, saying their absence from the Kyoto Protocol was one of its major defects. He stated climate change cannot be solved without including China and India in the process, but that trying to force them to participate would not work. To gain their cooperation, he said it is necessary to show China and India that increasing clean energy production is to their benefit; engaging the private sector is essential. The solution to climate change must both spur economic development and address environmental issues. He noted a METI sponsored discussion forum on clean energy and the environment, which brings together Japanese companies with Chinese counterparts and that has resulted in over 20 projects. This type of forum helps China understand that there are means available to reduce GHG emissions.

¶5. (C) S/E Stern said he agrees with the Vice Minister's points regarding the Kyoto Protocol's shortcomings and the importance of significant participation from the emerging market economies. The U.S. appreciates Japan's leadership in encouraging these countries to participate/act and the challenge lies in finding a way to bring them on board. S/E Stern added, while technology may provide the long term solution to climate change, we do not have much time to put in place agreements for addressing the issue.

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Challenges for U.S. and Praise for Major Emitters Dialogue

¶6. (C) S/E Stern set out three challenges facing the U.S. and the international community to reaching an agreement on a new framework. First, the timing of Copenhagen presented a problem for the United States, since it leaves little time for the U.S. to get domestic GHG reduction legislation passed. Congress, he said, would be reluctant to take on international commitments before having the appropriate domestic legislation and programs in place. Second, S/E Stern agreed with Mochizuki's assessment that inclusion of China and India is essential and that they must see addressing climate change as a beneficial part of their economic development. He said the U.S. hoped to develop a bigger partnership with China, and perhaps the U.S., Japan and China could cooperate on developing clean energy technology. Third, it is necessary to develop a mechanism to help finance deployment of technologies to developing countries. One part would be leveraging private capital by policy changes that provide incentives for private sector investment.

¶7. (C) Mochizuki said the GOJ had high regard for the U.S. leadership in the Major Economies process and said he hoped the MEM will continue. The MEM is valuable in developing consensus in the UNFCCC; doing so without the MEM would be difficult because of the large number of developing countries and structure/dynamics of the UNFCCC. S/E Stern said he had long thought there needed to be some smaller group of major economies engaged in addressing climate change issues. While the Administration is developing its position, he thought the form of the MEM is right and agreed a structure like the MEM should continue, although perhaps under a different name. With Italy holding the G8 presidency in 2009, he said it would make sense for Italy to host a MEM type leaders meeting with the U.S. as co-chair. In the future, perhaps one of the emerging economies could be co-chair, but not yet, he added.

¶8. (U) Meeting participants:

Japan

-Vice Minister Harufumi Mochizuki, METI
-Masanori Suzuki, Director General, Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau, METI
-Jun Arima, Deputy Director General for Global Environmental Affairs, METI

United States

-Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern
-Robert Cekuta, Minister Counselor for Economic Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo
-Bart Cobbs, Environment, Science, and Technology Unit Chief, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo

¶9. (U) S/E Stern cleared this cable subsequent to his departure from Tokyo.

ZUMWALT